## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A sound retrieving method comprising:

a storing step for storing one or more audio signals as retrieving keys;

a first analyzing step for reading an audio signal among said one or more audio signals and analyzing the audio signal to output a first sound parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a second analyzing step for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing step for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a presenting step for presenting a determined result of the similarity based on the calculated similarity.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 1, wherein said audio signals operating as retrieving keys are extracted from the audio signal to be analyzed and stored.

4. (Original) The sound retrieving method according to claim 1, wherein said retrieving key sound characteristic parameters are obtained by the user by analyzing the part of the audio signal to be analyzed as specified by the user and said audio signal to be analyzed is analyzed by using the retrieving key sound characteristic parameters.

5. (Previously Presented) A sound retrieving method comprising:

a storing step for storing one or more sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys, each of the sound characteristic parameters being dependent on structural factors of a sound source of an audio signal;

a reading step for reading a first sound characteristic parameter among said one or more sound characteristic parameters;

an analyzing step for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing step for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a presenting step for presenting a determined result of the similarity based on the calculated similarity.

6. (Original) The sound retrieving method according to claim 5, wherein said retrieving key sound characteristic parameters are those obtained by analyzing said

audio signal operating as retrieving keys that are extracted from said audio signal to be

analyzed.

7. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 1,

wherein more than one retrieving keys are sequentially used on one by one basis by a

predetermined time unit for the process of computationally determining the similarity.

8. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 1,

wherein the result of each retrieving process using a retrieving key is displayed for the

audio signal to be analyzed on a temporal basis.

9. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 5,

wherein the result of each retrieving process using a retrieving key is displayed for the

audio signal to be analyzed on a temporal basis.

10. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 1,

wherein only the part or parts of the audio signal to be analyzed resembling the

retrieving keys are extracted and reproduced as a result of the retrieving process.

11. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 5,

wherein only the part or parts of the audio signal to be analyzed resembling the

retrieving keys are extracted and reproduced as a result of the retrieving process.

12. (Previously Presented) A sound information storing method comprising:

a storing step for storing one or more audio signals as retrieving keys;

a first analyzing step for reading an audio signal among said one or more audio signals and analyzing the audio signal to output a first sound parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a second analyzing step for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing step for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a recording step for recording a determined result of the similarity based on the calculated similarity.

13. (Original) The sound information storing method according to claim 12, wherein said result of the retrieving process is recorded with said audio signal on said recording medium.

14. (Previously Presented) The sound information storing method according to claim 12, wherein each of said retrieving key sound characteristic parameters obtained from respective audio signals operating as retrieving keys is obtained as a result of an analyzing process conducted on a part of said input audio signal selected and extracted according to an instruction of the user.

15. (Original) The sound information storing method according to claim 14, wherein said retrieving key sound characteristic parameters of said one or more than one audio signals operating as retrieving keys obtained as a result of the analyzing process conducted on a part of said audio signal selected and extracted according to an instruction of the user are stored in different respective memory areas of a buffer memory and subsequently read out and used for the process of retrieving a part of the input audio signal by computationally determining the similarity.

16. (Original) The sound information storing method according to claim 14, wherein said one or more than one parts of said input audio signal selected and extracted according to respective instructions of the user are stored in different respective memory areas of a buffer memory as audio signals operating as retrieving keys and said one or more than one audio signals operating as retrieving keys are read out from said buffer memory and analyzed to produce respective retrieving key sound characteristic parameters so that said process of retrieving a part of the input audio signal by computationally determining the similarity is conducted by using said audio signals operating as retrieving keys.

17. (Previously Presented) The sound information storing method according to claim 12, wherein said sound characteristic parameters of said audio signals operating as retrieving keys or said audio signals operating as retrieving keys are recorded with said result of the retrieving process on said recording medium.

18. (Original) The sound information storing method according to claim 14, wherein said sound characteristic parameters of said audio signals operating as retrieving keys or said audio signals operating as retrieving keys are recorded with said result of the retrieving process on said recording medium.

19. (Previously Presented) A sound information retrieving device comprising;

a storing means for storing one or more audio signals as retrieving keys;

a first analyzing means for reading an audio signal among said one or more audio signals and analyzing the audio signal to output a first sound parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a second analyzing means for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing means for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a presenting means for presenting a determined result of the similarity based on the calculated similarity.

20. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 19, wherein said result displaying means displays the said resembling part as determined by said retrieving means simultaneously with the temporal progress of said audio signal to be analyzed.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 19, further comprising a holding means for holding said one or more than one retrieving key sound characteristic parameters and a reading means for reading selected retrieving key sound characteristic parameters from said holding means and supplying them to said similarity determining means.

23. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 22, further comprising a retrieving key registering means for extracting sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys from said audio signal to be analyzed by analyzing said audio signal according to an instruction of the user and holding them in said holding means.

24. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 19, wherein more than one retrieving keys are sequentially used on a one by one basis by a predetermined time unit for the process of computationally determining the similarity.

25. (Previously Presented) A sound information retrieving device comprising:
a storing means for storing one or more sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys, each of the sound characteristic parameters being dependent on structural factors of a sound source of an audio signal;

a reading means for reading a first sound characteristic parameter among said

one or more sound characteristic parameters;

an analyzing means for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a

second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the

sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing means for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with

the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a reproducing means for reproducing a determined result of the similarity based

on the calculated similarity.

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The sound information retrieving device according to

claim 25, further comprising a retrieving key registering means for extracting said audio

signals operating as retrieving keys from said audio signal to be analyzed according to

an instruction of the user and holding them in said holding section.

28. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 25,

further comprising a holding means for holding said one or more than one retrieving key

sound characteristic parameters and a reading means for reading selected retrieving

key sound characteristic parameters from said holding means and supplying them to

said similarity determining means.

29. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 28, further comprising a retrieving key registering means extracting sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys from said audio signal to be analyzed by analyzing said audio signal according to an instruction of the user and holding them in said holding means.

30. (Original) The sound information retrieving device according to claim 25, wherein more than one retrieving keys are sequentially used on a one by one basis by a predetermined time unit for the process of computationally determining the similarity.

31. (Previously Presented) A sound information storage device comprising:

a retrieving means for retrieving one or more sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys, each of the sound characteristic parameters being dependent on structural factors of a sound source of an audio signal;

a reading means for reading a first sound characteristic parameter among said one or more sound characteristic parameters;

an analyzing means for analyzing an audio signal to be analyzed to output a second sound characteristic parameter that is dependent on structural factors of the sound source of the audio signal;

a comparing means for comparing the first sound characteristic parameter with the second sound characteristic parameter to calculate a similarity therebetween; and

a recording means for recording a determined result of the similarity based on the calculated similarity.

32. (Original) The sound information storage device according to claim 31, wherein said result of the retrieving process is recorded with said audio signal on said recording medium.

33.-34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) The sound information storage device according to claim [[34]]31, further comprising a retrieving key registering means for obtaining sound characteristic parameters as retrieving keys by extracting a part of said audio signal to be analyzed according to an instruction of the user and holding them in said holding means.

36. (Previously Presented) The sound information storage device according to claim 31, wherein more than one retrieving keys are sequentially used on a one by one basis by a predetermined time unit for the process of computationally determining the similarity.

37. -47. (Canceled)

48. (Previously Presented) The sound retrieving method according to claim 5, wherein more than one retrieving keys are sequentially used on one by one basis by a predetermined time unit for the process of computationally determining the similarity.